

Henry Lee to Andrew Jackson, July 1, 1826, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

MAJOR HENRY LEE TO JACKSON.

Monticello, July 1, 1826.¹

¹ Three days later Jefferson died.

dear General, I have been here and in the neighbourhood several days on the invitation of Mr. Jefferson to examine the documents in his possession relating to his conduct as Govr. of Virginia during the Revolution. Unfortunately for me I found him confined to his bed with a severe Dysentery, which cannot but place so old a patient in great danger. Dr. Douglasson,² the medical professor in the university, is of opinion that his disease is now subdued, but that his advanced years render it extremely doubtful whether he will not sink under the prostration of strength which it has occasioned. As soon as I arrived he sent out for me, and though he seemed to look upon his end as approaching, he spoke of it as an event rather unpleasant than terrible—like a traveller expressing his apprehension of being caught in a rain. I was surprised at the energy of his grasp and the alacrity of his conversation, and could not but admire the general predominance of mind over matter in all his words and actions in so trying and critical a moment. His daughter, Mrs. Randolph, hovers round his bed with grief at her heart and comfort in her hands, but I fear her misgivings will be verified in spite of her tenderness and care. It is said Mr. Jefferson has been careless of his health, and would probably have been in no danger had he been more prudent.

² Robley Dunglison, M.D.

Library of Congress

I learn from his family that he holds in contempt and abhorrence the men and measures of our present administration; and that his opinion as to the necessity of a change at the next presidential election concurs with mine and that of the great mass of our countrymen. On this I congratulate you, and admonished by the condition and sentiments of this venerable and illustrious man, I beg you to preserve your health and to accept the assurance of my constant and profound respect